

A  
L E T T E R  
TO  
DR. P E A R S E Y,  
IN  
ANSWER TO A DISCOURSE OF HIS,  
LATELY PUBLISHED;  
IN WHICH ARE ALSO  
SOME OBSERVATIONS  
ON  
DR. M A D A N ' S TREATISE  
ON P O L Y G A M Y.



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L E T T E R, &c.

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S I R,

**W**HEN I consider your ingenious researches into natural philosophy, and your late removal into and settling in a populous trading town, wherein many ingenious men reside, where, consequently, ingenuity of all kinds is much sought after, and ingenious men respected, when I add to this your abilities in expressing your sentiments in a powerful and pleasing manner as a writer, your exemplary conduct and steady observance of the moral duties, and the unreserved and even engaging manner of your address, I confess I have my fears lest some of your unguarded acquaintance and auditors should imbibe some principles and sentiments, which I by no means conceive can, nay, which I had almost said I knew could not, be either honourable to you, or useful to any. And in this my opinion I am more fully confirmed, by the publication of a late Discourse of yours. For, though I have given you credit, and will, for what degree of excellence soever you are, or may

hereafter be possessed of, that comes to my knowledge, I must except for the present, your notions regarding government, those relative to the constitution of our nature, and your denial of the proper existence of the souls of men, and your religious principles. As, therefore, you think it right to propagate your own opinions which you may believe to be beneficial and true, you will not rashly condemn me for resisting you, if, upon clearer grounds, I think they may, nay, that they have been proved to be not only not true, but of pernicious tendency. And this you will be the more easily led to, if in matters of the highest moment, and which regard in the strongest manner possible, men's most essential interests and concerns, if, I say, in matters that are not to be dispensed with, and concerning which we are by no means at liberty to think according to the pleasure of our own wills, you really are a legitimate follower of that Truth you profess to enquire into. I need not therefore apologize farther for this address. For as charity, according to your own sentiments, is the highest and most perfect imitation of the Divine Nature men are capable of, this never shews itself in so fair a point of view, never is more real and true than when it exerts itself strongly, and is deeply concerned for the eternal welfare of souls: to instruct out of true knowledge and love being a virtue, if I understand it aright, that comprehendeth the whole man, and reacheth not only the head but  
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the heart; a bright zeal; whose pure flame cannot be intemperate, which ought not therefore to be weakly or unfaithfully commended and almost in the same breath depreciated and arraigned, and which can never be fairly said to be used and shewn out of vanity and ostentation. Thus much premised to return to your Discourse.

As you always, Sir, and with great reason, both in your writings and Discourses, insist on the necessity of good works to the salvation of man, give me leave to observe that these are never at variance with a true faith, but naturally spring out of it, and through its active as well as benign operation, arrive at some tolerable degree of maturity and perfection. Some indeed it must be confessed there are, yea, it is to be feared, too many, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, who most undoubtedly will be called to a strict account for so doing. But their unnatural, eccentric, and most wretched example will be found at the same time to be no true plea for the want of faith. And though I admit of good works as a means absolutely necessary to, a qualification indispensable in, obtaining such salvation, and have as strongly insisted on them as yourself, yet I at the same time deny that they are the absolute, perfect, and proper cause thereof; for that is a matter of faith, and not of works, as St. Paul hath it, least **any man should boast**. If then the just man is thus **to live by his faith**, how is he to

do without it, should it be laid to his charge hereafter that he had opportunity abundant of obtaining the true faith, had he been well disposed in mind to receive it? For, as to a vain dependence on any finite being, any mere creature like himself, that may strictly, according to the best rules of argument rational and divine, the most accurate modes of expression, be called the having no faith at all. To have faith then, observe, is become now a great virtue, and the leader of the whole fair christian train, a duty strictly enjoined, which we are all bound to fulfil by our obedience as far as we are able.\*

Suppose now you and I were possessed of as much virtue as mere mortals could ever lay claim to, I apply to you now as to one esteemed by many, a divine, a philosopher, and a man of science, suppose I say thus even eminently qualified, according to the notions mankind at present have of such matters, we were called to answer strictly at the bar of eternal justice for our faults, as we have deviated from truth and uprightness both in thought and action, wherein we might have been both wiser and better, could you or I weakly suppose, I say, that the pleading

\* If true faith were not a matter of the last consequence, how came it that the disciples were so often and so severely checked for the want of it, by him who best knew the high importance of it? Was not this the reason why it was made the indispensable qualification of the person on whom a miracle was to be performed, and were not those who had it, on this account, always so eminently distinguished and so greatly rewarded.

our virtues at that awful and tremendous bar, where all must at length appear, would make a due compensation for our faults, more especially for the many grievous and wilful sins that every man commits, if no other and better help were at hand to support us in this dreadful emergency? For, mind me, the justice of God is as perfect as his mercy; this every man of sense and ability must admit: and they never were brought into union and harmony in regard of man since his fall, but in the person and through the sufferings of the Blessed Saviour of the world. If any such thought then could possibly enter into the heart of man, as thus to pretend to commute with justice eternal and unchangeable his virtues for his faults, must not such imagination confessedly be most weak, futile and vain? Nay, would it stand the trial even of an earthly tribunal?

The being puffed up then with a notion of our good works, without the whole tenour of a man's life were perfect, which I believe no one will presume to say his is, is abhorrent from every idea of humility, which is the foundation of all true religion. Without holiness indeed no man shall see the Lord. But, if we unduly depend on works without faith to support them, we may by degrees even be led to imagine, that eternal happiness is the due reward of our own merits: or, as the Church of Rome hath blasphemously taught, even at length pretend that we have me-

rit to spare for the use of others. So absurd and even blasphemous are such tenets, even, I say, as those of the Church of Rome on this article, though one should not perhaps at first sight imagine, that they were so near of kin to each other.

All then who deny a Saviour divine are forced at length to one or other or both of these dreadful extremities, either flatly to deny that God was able or willing to make man better than he is at present seen to be, which includes a disbelief of his omnipotence and his goodness, or absurdly, nay even blasphemously to say that he will pardon him offending without recompence or satisfaction, as one weak and sinful man uses and ought to pardon another, for acting unfaithfully and wickedly towards him; a matter which hath taken place by reason of mutual imperfections, and moreover now become the reasonable terms of mens acceptance with their maker through their mediator. God it is true is merciful and that infinitely. But then his mercy is not such as some weak men may dream of: his ineffable essence being perfect and uniform, and his attributes in compleat harmony with and supporting each other. For the Lord our God is merciful, for or because he rewardeth every man according to his works: justice and mercy, as I said before, being so united in him, that his justice in this most remarkable expression is even put for, or rather



rather is said even to comprehend his mercy. How then can any weak man suppose that he will deviate from this perfection original in the case of man?

This is reason, if I understand it aright, such as no man ought absurdly, unphilosophically, or unfairly to say is of a man's own making, which indeed none is, but arising out of the divine nature and attributes, consequently consistent with the absolute nature of things, and having no mode of existence possible but in him. This, I say, is matter substantial inculcated by and delivered out for man's use in almost every part of Scripture, which may therefore be decently, fairly, and even modestly, though forcibly, urged, especially when the occasion calls loudly for it, without incurring justly the imputation of pretending to search improperly into the divine counsels. One would think men must be aware at this time of day of truths so great as these, else what is it they can be said to have been about with the bible so long in their hands, or what a pretended learning aiming at?

A man indeed may say, I entertain such notions of the absolute unity of the Deity, both in regard of person as well as nature, that I never can admit the Christian revelation. Now, though this objection is rotten at the heart, yet,  
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when the high and sacred authority of scripture as a divine revelation, and the authenticity of the miraculous birth, divine actions, &c. of Christ are not taken into consideration, it must be confessed that it puts on an external plausible form, and carries along with it some faint shew at least, though it be only a deceitful air of consistency. At worst however, though bad and obstinate enough, it carries a more open and honest countenance than that system most absurdly introduced by some men, which, by quoting passages of scripture to serve a purpose, would render the Christian institution inconsistent with itself, and make a kind of mockery of the whole. It never fails however, but that those who pursue this method render themselves supremely ridiculous. For the Christian system never fails to recoil upon them, and always engages most powerfully in its own warfare. By partially admitting, or pretending to admit its truth, they are ever most absurdly contradicting themselves, be their abilities what they will; and prove undeniably, by their writings, the inconsistency of their sentiments. At one time they are talking of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; at another saying that they consider him only as a mere creature, under the direction of divine wisdom, and assisted by infinite power; matters so utterly irreconcilable with common sense, reason, and scripture, that it is a kind of  
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waste of time even to shew their absurdity. If we have any king but God the Father it must be in his delegated, anointed and most blessed Son united to the human nature, according to the repeated declarations of scripture: not a mere creature surely of the human race falsely pretended by man's vanity and pride to be exalted into a situation so sublime, that every man of true knowledge, or who thinks modestly and properly of human nature will confess, is by no means allotted to him. Here then again is an utter defect in regard of humility. But such is the case with regard to the pride of all human systems, modern as well as antient. Consider fairly now, Sir, I pray you, whether any man of true ingenuity, nay, whether any man of common sense would be the patron of such a system.

To exercise bad manners in a Christian country and to hold the truth in unrighteousness, a matter confessedly too prevalent in the present day, is certainly horridly impious, but to want true faith and consequently humility, in a creature so sinful as man, is at least as wicked, and, if possible, a monster of a more frightful mein, of more unnatural aspect. Because all men must be sensible that they are sinners, and that they have fallen short of the glory of God and their own happiness; that they must therefore lye under condemnation for such disobedience, a matter fore-  
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shewn by the testimony of their own minds against them, without the grace of God obtained for them by the sacrifice of propitiation in a divine Mediator. Divine, I say, certainly, because of the infinite dignity and glory of God, that he might be just also, according to St. Paul, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, and in order utterly to abase and even annihilate, if possible, the pride of man.

If you coolly and fairly examine the matter, then, Sir, you will find that yourself, the Turks, and all deists in general are deceived under the very appearance of truth itself. If a Turk meets a Christian, the first part of his salutation, by way of proper reprehension, as he thinks, is, God is one, a truth no doubt infallible ! A notable instance this of the craft and subtilty of the grand deceiver, a grand engine, I say, of the malice of infernal spirits, whereby, working unattended to on man's pride and proneness to a disobedient temper, they beguile unwary and unstable souls, and lead them on secretly to their own destruction. I say, when joined with the pride of thinking after our own way, and a disobedient temper of mind. For scripture is so far from affording men any room, much more from giving them any warrant for rejecting the person of the Son and Holy Spirit, that it is full and expresse in places innumerable as to their union with the Father of spirits,



spirits, in one common nature divine, so full that no man even of moderate common capacity, and an humble, tractable and obedient spirit, free from prejudice, and an undue influence of the passions, ever will reject its testimony. Some men then may continue to pride themselves in this notion of the absolute unity of the Deity, according to their ideas of it, as a proof of a philosophic spirit, if they please. But let me tell them that they are mistaken. There are many who *know* they are so, who truly believe or understand the unity of the Deity, in its proper and due sense, and in as full and complete a manner as any of these grand sticklers for it can pretend to; and, what is more, in a sense consonant with scripture, which theirs is not. And as to those who are not so capable of receiving it in the sublime sense of the sacred oracles, by depending on their truth, they have it in a manner fully sufficient for them, and they are in a state much better, and therefore far more eligible than that of those unruly spirits, who are led on to deny those inspired writings, and by degrees to reject their testimony, through the pride, corruption, and wilful frowardness of the human mind.

As to other objections of weak men against the Christian system, contradicted by the express testimony of scripture, such as the impossibility as well as injustice of vicarious punishment, they will

will apply well enough to weak mortals like themselves, but will by no means affect a system divine, wherein God is the agent, who alone is capable of restoring his creatures to their proper state when they have deviated from it, and where his son, united to the human nature for that very end, is the sufferer. Mere man indeed, cannot possibly assist man by becoming a sacrifice for him. In proof however of the heinousness of sin and the strong testimony of a conscience against it, it is well known that even human sacrifices were adopted in times past by some heathen nations, and the fruit of the body given for the sin of the soul. Which, though it be in its nature inhumanly and horridly impious, as well as foolish and totally void of sense and reason, yet carries along with it a terrible proof of the sharp pangs and agonizing feelings of the human heart, while men were ignorant of the means whereby they were to escape punishment, as well as a most convincing testimony of the truth of the Christian religion. As to the objections drawn from the impassibility of the divine nature, I have already shewn that they will not apply to it in its union with the human in the person of Christ.

So much with regard to matters of Faith and the necessity of the practice of the moral duties. As to Duty in general there is no one comes into the world without the tie of what are called civil duties

duties upon him, as well as of moral. You and I when we came into the world owed obedience to the powers under which we were born, as well as to our parents; which we were bound to pay as soon as the light of reason arose within us, and we had a proper knowledge of such obligations. To say then that any man ever was born free from such ties is idle and childish. In the first ages civil and moral restraint both centered, under providence, in the same person. Under providence I say, for no compact of men however formed, could make it lawful to take away life for any offence soever, but under this sanction supreme. Therefore, the excellent Hooker, in the conclusion of his first book on laws, justly, as well as most sublimely says, that "of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is in the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: that all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempt from her power, both Angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."

But how widely different from this should you and I act, if, in a christian country, where the ecclesiastical and civil polity are united, and, as it were, interwoven together, we without reason,  
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and for my part I know not of any, that will warrant resistance, especially among people who call themselves christians, if we I say, should without reason resist and be disobedient to either, and by consequence rebel against him under whose auspices government in all its kinds is established? Many pretended reasons have been given for such resistance, but, for my part I say, I know of none that will stand any fair enquiry upon scriptural grounds or any other, even though government should be unduly exercised. For, though it be so, obedience ought to be paid to all kinds of it for this plain reason, though I could mention many others more forcible and weighty, that even the worst kind of government is far better than none at all. Many nations wherein arbitrary power is established, seem fully sensible of this great truth. Is it not then a shame to christians that Turks and Infidels yield truer obedience in such absolute monarchies, than some of the former are willing to pay under a constitution the best framed and most temperate in the world?

You have urged that you have been ill used; so have I, for writing against you, and persons embracing the same sentiments, and doing that for my country in an emergent crisis, which no one before me had done, though many for several years had attempted it. For thus doing my duty

I think



I think I have been, if I have not lost my understanding, extremely ill used and traduced. And though my writings were eminently useful, in actually confuting and silencing for a time, and putting a stop to the attempts of the parties so troublesome and hurtful, as even to clog in some measure the wheels of government,\* yet I could not escape the severest censure. But are these to be reasons with you or me for resisting any lawful power in being? For my part I think it but fair to remonstrate, but there let the matter for ever rest, at least on that quarter. For we are called by christianity, if we wish to be true professors of it, not only to forgive but to pray for all who use us ill, but, at the same time, we are not obliged to take them into the number of or to rank them in the list of our friends. For my own part I most sincerely wish they may re-

\* As I wrote against persons of your sentiments, I shall not tax you with teizing and arraigning me, because I did not do it in a manner that pleased all men. Besides, I dare say, you would not unwarrantably tax any one with being proud and impious, because he did not think exactly as Mr. Locke did on matters of reason and faith, or any other man uninspired in the world; or think it candid, generous, humane, or even decent to do so. To think after our own way, as he did and would do, is undoubtedly the parent of superstition, or enthusiasm, or infidelity, or error in one deceitful shape or other. And, when this pride is joined with obstinacy, it is the certain bane of all true knowledge. But this can never be the case with the man whose notions are in perfect concord with scripture; not fully quoted in particular texts to serve a bye end; but according to the general sense and contexture of the whole. Let any one of my sentiments be proved heterodox, and I shall certainly recall it. But it is undoubtedly more reasonable and instructing to think of the Divine Existence according to the real sense in scripture revealed, than even to follow closely the scholastic one of Athanasius, which hath given so much offence.

turn to a better mind, for their own unspeakable advantage. It is strange to a truly ingenuous mind to think, but notwithstanding too true it is, that in the world there are many men of little minds who are capable of envy, a passion too base for any truly great or ingenuous mind to entertain!

Envy, I say, is the vice of little minds, hence the known adage *Qui invidet minor est*. It is a mean and most vicious passion whose baneful influence and dire effects are malicious: which cuts off all who are guilty of it from any even the smallest pretensions, the least claim whatever either to true knowledge or virtue. Hence that of Solomon; "But I will not go with consuming envy, for such a man shall have no fellowship with wisdom." It is an hateful sin which the wicked Jews committed in the last instance against the Blessed Saviour of the world, when they delivered up his most sacred person into the hands of Pilate, it being recorded in express terms, that he knew that for envy they had so delivered him.

If then men could traduce and pretend to villify the Blessed Saviour of the world, what are not such defective beings as you and I to expect at the hands of our fellow-creatures? For my own part, I profess before the judge of hearts, I had not the least mercenary motive for what I did, that I know of. But I make small account

count of man's judgment, and I know likewise that every one who would do his duty as he ought, must take up the cross and follow the footsteps of his divine master. I will not pretend however to speak much of my good deeds, which I know are by no means superabundant in any. I believe, however, that I may fairly say my faith is as it should be, and there is in that, what I apprehend there is in nothing else, a principle of virtue that is permanent.

What makes the matter more extraordinary is that an ingenious gentleman whom I greatly respect was complimented by a great man for delivering a discourse, the basis of which was taken from my writings. Can you tell me the reason of this? Why the bulk of mankind cannot look upon men but according to the rank they hold in life and the station they fill. One would not chuse however to go into the other world haunted by ideas of worldly grandeur, which can never there be satiated. The form of this world, if properly used, is well enough. But every great mind, like that extraordinary Personage the present Emperor of Germany, will endeavour to wean himself gradually from it; as knowing that its fashion passeth away, and that no man's external state can follow him into that endless duration of being, in which he will soon be finally fixed: nothing being of any account there but improve-

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ment of the talents given, even full exercise of the mind both in knowledge and virtue.

If there be any who are determined that nothing instructive shall proceed but from their own quarter, they would do well to consider that it has been the constant and uniform belief of wise and good men, that its Great Author governs this world and all things in it, even in the minutest circumstances and incidents. If this opinion then is admitted, have we not abundant reason to adore the infinite wisdom of his ways in affording knowledge to, and to admire the wonderful methods of his providence in the secret, gradual, and imperceptible manner wherein he instills it into some minds, as well as to revere the judgment of his secret counsels whereby he also denies it to others, suiting withal his dispensations always to the present exigency? And is it not as reasonable to conclude, that, whenever he thus dispenseth his gifts, he intends it should raise a proper and laudable emulation and desire of excelling in them, whether they be of knowledge or virtue, not tainted however with invidious jealousy even in the least degree, because no such circumstances as I have already proved, can possibly consist with the temper of a great, extraordinary, and truly generous mind?\*

\* Even Addison himself, notwithstanding all his good sense, learning, and happy temperature of mind, was led away by the fury, and tainted with the rancour of this ungoverned and malignant passion.

I hope



I hope there is no one who will pretend to restrain the influence of the Divine Being upon human minds, and to say unto him, hitherto shalt thou go and no further. As to human beings, every one must be sensible that the necessary and loud cry of the times calls upon all to do the utmost they can to prevent the progress of deism and infidelity, as well as of prophaneness, immorality, dissipation, and a thoughtless disregard of the public welfare, matters which the generality of mankind are but too apt to pass over with slight regard, and not to consider the serious and alarming nature and consequence of! This necessary call ought to be one great rule of men's conduct: the other to follow the example of the Blessed Saviour of the world, when his disciples, and among them the beloved John, were jealous that another even cast out devils in his name, and told him that they forbid him because he did not follow them. "Forbid him not" said he: "for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part." But to return.---

If a great apostle, under divine inspiration, hath declared that God was manifest in the flesh, nay if our Saviour himself rebuked one of his disciples for not knowing him, and even asserted in express terms, that he who had seen him had

seen the Father, were not these things written for our information and instruction, upon whom the ends of the world are come, in which all were to know God from the least to the greatest? What then, I pray you, is to be made of the absurd tenets of some men who deny the divinity of the second person, and pretend, at this time of day, to teach Christians a new faith; or of the strange conduct of others, who, after a revelation made on purpose in the old testament to shew that God is Being itself, and a peculiar writer of most remarkable qualifications natural, and under the direction of an extraordinary inspiration, set apart professedly to treat of in the new, and as sublimely to declare the spiritual nature of the Son, and an absolute declaration that an holy spirit proceeds from them, that a spirit filling all space and pervading all things proceedeth from the central glorious presence of Majesty Divine, ineffable, of Being itself; nay the same heard descending with a sound from heaven, and the emblem of the divine presence of this most Holy Being, full of power, knowledge, and love unutterable, seen visibly resting on the heads of the apostles and others on the day of Pentecost, and yet after all are for lapping up what is thus to be known of the Divine Being in impenetrable mystery, contrary to the design of the gospel in revealing it, even while they are pestered and buffeted on all sides by men who deny the truth concerning

cerning it? The secret things belong indeed unto the Lord our God, but those which he hath revealed, unto us, and unto our children for ever.

In short he that knows any thing of mankind, has any knowledge I say, or any modesty or feeling left, must know that men are great sinners; that their maker could not place their common parents in such a state, nor be pleased with them in it; that he who is above all thought and conception great would not institute any system to relieve them from this dreadful emergency under the auspices of any mere mortal, in nature wholly existent and made as they are. This his infinite dignity will not permit. Nay, so contradictory is it to the whole tenour and commands of scripture, that they are even pronounced cursed who take man for their help, and in their hearts depart from the Lord. From whence it follows infallibly, that they who can think so meanly of their Lord and Master, have done what they could to degrade him from his high dignity, and to debase their own minds, by conceptions of him, which never will agree with reason or the sacred pages. For, if the apostles were commanded by their master to go and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, while this single passage of scripture remains to stare infidels in the face, and while conscience remains in man, they will never

be able to reconcile their absurd tenets to either.

Must it not make a reasonable man stare, nay even start with terror, to see the arch heretic Socinus and others of his stamp, at this time of day, compared to and classed with such venerable names as those of Luther and other fathers of the Reformation? I will not pretend to say what may not happen in future ages, because I believe such opinions will at length prevail, and meet with almost general approbation. But this I will say, that, when the writings of Socinus shall be universally esteemed, and his notions become general, the end of all things will be at hand. For then will be verified the saying of our Lord, that, when he shall come the second time to judgment, he shall hardly find faith upon the earth.

When you look at the great central luminary the sun, the soul, as it were, under its great author of the material world, and from the light and heat of which nothing is said to be hid, did you ever, Sir, doubt, that the light darting out and issuing from it was a distinct body from, though precisely of the same individual nature and in intimate communication with, the great one from which it proceeds, and concerned in the same powerful, extraordinary, and beneficial purposes of shedding light on the whole visible creation,



creation, in rendering this earth fruitful, and invigorating and supporting all things animate and inanimate, according to the eternal design instituted in the wise counsels, and ordained by the benevolent will of the Great Creator, of whose eternal being, truth, and infinite power, by its spherical form, and embodied light proceeding from it, it is the material emblem? \* If you then are sensible of these things, how dare you, Sir, to doubt that revelation of his being and nature, which he hath vouchsafed to afford mankind in holy writ, to pretend to understand it better than he himself, and to deny that to him which is to be observed even in his works, as faintly representative of the immense perfection of his being? The ancient Persians were so affected with the sight of this grand object in nature, that they worshipped this emblem and creature instead of the spiritual real being of the deity. They indeed were idolators. But how comes it that you who are esteemed a divine and great philosopher, who are, or ought to be, better instructed, as not having been bred up under the prejudices of that idolatrous nation, though you seem to be endeavouring like them, to reduce every thing you can to matter as far as you are able, how comes it, I say, that you, who have been bred up in a Christian country, and have great natural

\* In reference to this emblem St. John says God is light, and that in him is no darkness at all.

qualifications,

qualifications, are not able to obtain true spiritual belief and knowledge, by the due consideration of this immense object, held forth on high for the contemplation of all men?

The truth is this, men's minds in general are too much bent down towards the gross earth they tread on, or are so fully engaged in the pursuit of its enticing and delusive objects, of profit, pleasure or amusement, that they never even think as they ought. If this were not the case, or if the false views of a vain ambition, or the wrong bias of prejudice or a refractory spirit did not mislead them, and turn them aside from their due course, it had been impossible, at this time of day, that there could have been disputes upon this subject. Some have been known ambitious to support a name, even in contradiction of all excellence of knowledge, to all virtuous principles and actions, though it must for ever stand an object of abhorrence and a monument of infamy. Others, I say, scarce ever lift up their eyes towards heaven, not from an excess of humility, but a nature groveling upon earth almost like the beasts that perish, in pursuit of the pomp, riches, pleasures and idle amusements of this transitory state. But what alas! is a momentary life, even though our pride and other passions were gratified to the full in every part of it, and it were wholly spent in the manner we might wish!

Whatever

Whatever however be its cause, whether pride, prejudice, disobedience of temper, attachment to the world, or any other circumstance, to deny the absolute, proper personal being of the essential ideal or archetypal wisdom of the divine nature begotten by the Father of Spirits from all eternity, to say that he who is called, nay who calls himself, Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, from whose look of dignity divine, incomprehensible, the very heavens and earth are said to flee away, and to be even annihilated in his presence, who being in union eternal with the Father, by his own proper power, when on earth united to the human nature, called the dead out of their graves, who is said to know the hearts of all men, to govern the world at present, and to be the final judge of it,\* to say that he is a mere creature, is, as the prophet Jeremy expresseth it, to become brutish in knowledge, to deny again that a spiritual emanation full of power, knowledge and love proceeds from the infinitely perfect, central, glorious spiritual being the Father and from the Son, through the whole infinity of space, distinct and personal, though in intimate communion, union and fellowship with him, who hath fixed and resideth in his eternal seat in the heaven of heavens,

\* Do these attributes, Sir, belong to a creature? He who is called the first born of every creature or the beginning of the creation of God, the great archetype of all things, and by whom whatever is in heaven and earth is declared to be made and by no means without him, surely had a being eternal prior to his union with the human nature.

in ineffable radiance divine, with his only begotten Son in this his glory at his right hand, to deny, I say, this true being of God revealed in scripture, in regard of which all other notions are declared by the great and beloved disciple full of inspiration, to be even idolatry itself, to deny the true existence of this Being of Beings, whom all things in heaven and in earth in their proper orbs and motions, whom all creatures that live and move, whom musical sounds and compositions, &c. continually celebrate even in the present state, while the voice of all nature joins therein, is blasphemy so unnatural, horrid and inexpressible, that superior beings in happiness even weep at, and one would almost be led to think that God, the impartial judge of men, who looks on all with an equal eye, for the wise reasons of his providence had denied to such men even the use of reason.

When you see your country, Sir, surrounded by, and even internally afflicted with numerous evils, when the sword and pestilence are devouring at large, an invasion of these kingdoms meditated, hurricanes, tempests, and inundations swallowing up whole towns, destroying your fellow creatures by thousands, and spreading destruction and desolation far and wide---lightening in your own country running along like that in Egypt, on the ground---tempestuous hail-forms



storms mixed with pieces of ice, cutting asunder as with a knife, and destroying vegetable productions, and attended with dreadful lightning and thunder almost incessantly for a great part of three days, as was the case this year in Herefordshire---whole fields of corn blasted and mildewed and even famine in such a climate as this threatened, does it not once occur to your mind, that there must be a cause why Providence inflicts such sore calamities on mankind? Perhaps you will tell me the manners of men are bad and wicked, and I agree fully with you that they are so in a very great degree. But this, Sir, is not all. When I see men of your sentiments in religion, perverting, as far as they are able, the truth of the faith, and such a man as Dr. M---n using methods which, if followed, would corrupt the morals, and pervert and destroy the happiness of his fellow creatures, by introducing the anti-ent Polygamy, the shame and disgrace of former times, and of which common sense, even in these corrupt days, is ashamed, I have then, or think I have, fully before me as far as it reaches, but certainly not farther\*, that abomination of desolation described by the prophet Jeremy, where the prophet and priest were prophane. And if to this be added the prophaneness among the vul-

\* As it was ever far from my intention to tax any one of true knowledge and in whom sound principles in religion and exemplary manners are united, with this charge, so may it ever remain.

gar, and the luxury, extravagance, and corruption among people of middle and higher ranks, the base arts made use of to deceive, defraud, and even ruin their neighbours, to say nothing of rebellion, disagreement, party feuds, &c. it requires no peculiar sagacity to know, no extraordinary quickness of sight to foresee that things are not right amongst us.

If we then are thus stricken, and have not duly grieved, have not called to mind and been sensible of the cause, nor been properly humbled under the high hand which afflicts us---if we are thus consumed, and yet have refused to receive correction, does it not argue a littleness of mind, a poorness of conception, and great folly in our conduct? that we have by no means known the way of the Lord, nor the judgement of our God?

As to Dr. M---n, the generality of mankind have too much regard for their peace and welfare to be entrapped in his snares. And therefore his attempts, did not the serious air of the times direct otherwise, were rather matter of ridicule, than what deserves any serious answer; for almost every page of the new testament is a direct confutation of his monstrous notions. I say monstrous. For, after what has passed before in regard of matters of faith, his production, in respect of its direct tendency to corrupt morals  
also,

also, may be properly termed a kind of finishing stroke, and be justly looked upon as the second Prodigy of the Age.

Give me leave to introduce, to the notice and observation of the admirers of such extraordinary phenomena, the following passage from St. Paul to the Ephesians, ch. iv. "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, that ye henceforth be no more children carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love may grow up unto him in all things which is the head, even Christ." Can any man possibly suppose that he who is here most sublimely called the head, and who is in the next verse also stiled Lord, is a mere man? Again. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old

old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Will Dr. M---n now have the face to say, that the polygamy of Turks and Infidels is agreeable to the righteousness and true holiness of God prescribed by St. Paul as a rule of conduct to the Ephesian church?

The Polygamy of former times God winked at, but, when Dr. M---n understands his Bible somewhat better, he will find, that he never gave a sanction to it by express command. There is a positive one to the contrary in Leviticus the sixth, ver. 19th, "and that no Jew should take a wife to her sister, or another wife to vex her, to uncover her nakedness besides the other in her life time." And, when to this is added the purity of the priests marriages commanded in the same book Chap. xxi, ver. 13th, "and that they should always take a wife in her virginity," it is fully evident, that Polygamy was introduced among the Jews like many other wicked practices, by following the corrupt notions and example of the heathen nations around them, and that, according to the expression of the saviour of the world in regard of divorce, from the beginning it was not so. Besides God upon the promulgation of the gospel called men every where to repent, seeing, as

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St. Paul hath it, he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness. So much for Dr. M---n's fine scheme, a matter not able to make a fair entry into the world, to exhibit a decent appearance in times wherein adultery and all manner of uncleanness are even become fashionable, but in a peculiar manner abhorrent from the christian System, and therefore at all times and at all seasons, as in this gross instance, utterly scandalous to the whole christian world.

As to your notion of the corporeal origin of Ideas, I cannot find that there is any thing to support it, but our experience of the faculties of the mind being affected, nay Ideas sometimes wholly lost when the body greatly suffers: as the latter is also affected in its turn, when the mind is agitated and ill at ease. Not trusting however this notion too far, you would do well to consider the Idea which the quick and piercing mind of Des Cartes had when he considered that he thought, and with which he begins his Philosophy. You see he would not trust matter, but when he perceived he thought, he says, he knew he existed. Now though he might as well have taken the matter upon Faith at first, which sooner or later all men must come to, who ever intend to have knowledge in this world, more especially of the highest kind, yet it must be con-

fessed, that there is something very remarkable  
 and sublime in his notion, and worthy of a Philo-  
 sopher. Suppose now that we could even ima-  
 gine that the soul had no existence original with  
 the body, which however will by no means agree  
 with the experience we have of the likeness of  
 qualifications and tempers hereditary in families,  
 as well as of bodily similitude, yet we shall have  
 gained little ground when we come withal to  
 consider, that when even through the medium of  
 the body, if you will have it so, thought has ta-  
 ken place, there must be a kind of spiritual exist-  
 ence then begun, which does and will go on, if  
 properly managed, in improvement in know-  
 ledge and virtue towards perfection. To believe  
 however that the soul thus begins to exist from  
 and wholly dependant on the action of the body  
 is a notion too unphilosophical to hold; it must  
 have had a prior existence when the body first  
 began to come into being. We are said you  
 know to be made in the image of God himself,  
 whose being certainly is spiritual. Besides doth  
 not the Saviour of the world say fear not them  
 that kill the body but are not able to kill the  
 soul; but fear him that is able to destroy both  
 body and soul in hell. Now here is an evident  
 distinction made between soul and body, the  
 force of which is obvious: And, which is most  
 likely to understand perfectly their separate and  
 proper nature and powers, the Son of God or  
 you,

you, I pray you judge. Can it be fairly supposed that a fine spun philosophy will be able to stand its ground in the face of such weighty objections? By no means. Have a care then, Sir, that you do not totally spoil your mind through vain philosophy and the pretended learning of this world, as those of thousands and millions have been before you.\* Providence hath allotted

\* Were I to shew all Mr. Locke's errors, the matter would take up a great part of the compass of his own large volumes. The great Stillingfleet and the eminent Christian philosopher Norris, were aware that there were some in his doctrine of ideas: but he was too quick for the former; and, to the notions of the latter, he did not pay due regard. He had perhaps as piercing a mind as most men have ever been endued with. But he, like you, Sir, was too fond of being the creator of systems. Besides, for a man to think as he did, that men, barely by the use of their natural faculties, may attain to all the knowledge they have, without the help of any innate impressions, such are his very words with more to the same purpose, is an opinion so fraught with pride, that the man who entertained it could never have humility enough to follow truth, and be a good philosopher. His denial of all innate principles speculative or practical, and what he advances in chap. iii. of book iv. vol. i. of the possibility of thought arising from or in matter organized, have afforded you ample room indeed to erect your material system, and to refine upon him, if your attempt is fairly entitled to the use of that term. His notions, I say rest upon a kind of material foundation like yours, though at first sight not so fully evident and perceptible, but, by no means, I think, upon solid and perfect ground. The soul is to be dependant on the body, not only for some, but for all the ideas which first enter into the mind.

Nothing can be predicated of a thing which is contrary to our knowledge and experience in the thing itself. A child is known to have the idea of sucking soon after it is born. Now call this instinct or what you will, it is an idea, and that idea is innate. It is given by the Great Author of human being, for the safety and preservation of the individual. The action is undoubtedly attended with a perception and a knowledge of it, nor can you separate from it the thought of doing it, no more than you can desire and volition or tendency of the will, all qualifications and

ted you many excellent gifts, but it is possible a wrong turn may make them useless, bring a dark cloud

properties or actions of being spiritual, implanted in or proceeding from the soul, and through its union with the body empowering the latter to act, as well as directing its motion towards good offered. The same thing is exemplified in creatures not rational, who are conscious of their powers, have that of self-determination, and fill their rank of being properly, according to their several natures distinct in the order of being appointed in the wise counsel, and ordained by the benevolent will of the creator, and known to philosophers under the name of Instinct, and the *Anima Brutorum*. Even brutes then have innate ideas and knowledge, though more ideas are not afforded them than such as are requisite to their state, which requires neither the power of reasoning on them.

But to come now to ideas characteristic of human nature. What is native modesty but an intuitive truth or perception of the soul? a principle intellectual and practical, a notion and virtue not acquired and learnt, but innate or given; not improved according to the natural tendency of Mr. Locke's system of ideas, but which by degrees wears off, though it is difficult, without great corruption of the mind indeed, to wholly part with. Besides the soul and its ideas and desires are transmitted now under a state of imperfection original. We are therefore said to be born in sin and the children of wrath. It is renewed by that heavenly institution appointed to restore it, and brought back in some degree to its primitive state, by the good ideas imparted by the spirit of God, and his most holy influence upon the mind.

The idea we have of truth, our love of it and original belief that every one speaks it, seem to me to be other native principles or impressions, and consequently are very difficult to be worn out.

Having proved, I think sufficiently, that there are ideas innate, it will be the less incumbent on me to prove the existence of the soul. The reason however why we cannot get any true idea of substance, and why it is, as Mr. Locke says, I know not what, and I know not where, probably is, because our souls are immaterial. And it is called in as a substratum to support accidents, as philosophers term them, because most men have no idea of their proper existence in ideal truth which is not material.

In voluntary motion the powers of the body are dependant on the soul for their exertion. It is an act of the understanding and will joined ruling those powers in a limited degree. Vision too is an active power  
of



cloud of ignorance upon your mind, and what is still worse, even perhaps endanger your future quiet and repose.

### What

of the mind, called forth probably by the impression of external objects, but no mere passive nor internal perception of pictures painted on the retina and thence carried to the sensorium, as hath hitherto been weakly imagined, but of objects seen abroad in their proper place and situation. Otherwise we should see all things double, as we do sometimes when an object intervenes, or we are deeply immersed in thought, in viewing objects of the mind.

From simple beginnings the faculties of the understanding and will go on more and more to act, and the reasoning one in man gradually to unfold and exert its powers. More ideas are imparted and more gotten. And, no doubt, these powers receive help, are put forward and increased by the sensation of the soul through the medium of the body, to which it is united, and in which it acts, and by reflecting upon them. But still the food which properly nourishes the mind, in whatever way or in what degree soever it is imparted, as the mind is originally made able, has opportunity, or is willing to receive it, is administered by truth eternally existent in the Divine mind. This the reasoning faculty cannot give being to, by it it is enlightened; by that being alone in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, the infinite fulness of whose being containeth all true ideas, and in whom is no variableness or shadow of turning. Reason is Truth. What an unaccountable vanity then was it for a man to think that he was capable of having or forming all the true ideas he had by the mere force of his own powers, and those too in a state degenerate? For if the soul of an infant be indebted to its maker for the knowledge implanted in it for the preservation of its being, how much more that of man for the sublime knowledge sometimes, nay often and generally imparted to it?

Thus manifestly and essentially different from Mr. Locke's notions are my sentiments on these subjects, with the warrant of scripture on their side, delivered in numberless places, in the most express terms. He made no better of his subject, when he determined in his own mind that all language was arbitrary. It is hardly possible to conceive how a man of so acute an understanding, and a Christian too, and consequently fully acquainted with the history of the confusion of Babel and of the miraculous gift of tongues, could imagine, notwithstanding the opinion of the learned in general was on that side, that words were mere arbitrary sounds, without any meaning correspondent with ideas, or true signification:

What will be the state of the soul however after death, seeing it is a being wholly dependant  
on

nification : an idea as distant from truth as possible ; and which I shall not hesitate to declare to be as gross and stupid an one, as almost ever corrupted the mind of man. It had been reasonable at least to have allowed meaning to the radical words in the ancient languages, seeing some words are capable of so many senses, and of so great extent of derivation from them, whatever had become or been predicated of their corruptions with one another. But even these, at least most of them, have a meaning, and a great one too, arising from the innate power of language original. It is granted there are arbitrary terms imposed on things by men, but even these are not always void of meaning.

Is it not pretty kind of nonsense to say he writes in fine language, his words are well chosen, and yet at the same time deny that there is any meaning in them ? But thus it is with men, when falsely trusting to the guidance of the human understanding in its present corrupt state, and to that only, they tread the dark mazes and inextricable labyrinths of error : they are bewildered and lost. Thus it is when, by its short line, they pretend to fathom the infinite depths of knowledge ; when they wade beyond their depth in search of false philosophy, and pretended science. They are like passengers in ships turned adrift upon a broad and rough sea, without rudder to guide, ballast to keep steady, or compass to steer by, without the influence of one friendly star to help them and point out their course, benighted and immersed in darkness, destitute and forlorn.

That language has an absolute meaning as representative of the ideas of the Soul is a great point of learning, which ought to have been long since settled, beyond a possibility of Doubt. But then men must open their souls a little more before this or any other will : or they will be able to entertain knowledge sublime, or get learning properly so called.

It was a favourite notion of Dr. Reid and some other scotch writers, before Dr. Beattie appeared, that the truth in science was about to come out, having great expectations from his writings. Now they are told that faith is necessary to obtain it, and belief in truth essential, the information does not please, because it comes from a wrong quarter. This however is the only way to give stability to science. And it is the duty of men to take these friendly hints and to improve upon such knowledge. For it never did, nor probably ever will come, but from those few and rare minds of good  
good

on Divine Providence for its existence, myself nor any man can determine. But, as the body is its proper center in which it at present acts, it is plain enough that it will be in its most perfect state of being, when it is re-united to it in the resurrection. Now what does it signify to me what its separate state may be, if it is a certain truth that there will be such resurrection? I say a certain truth; for it is equally as certain as that you and I exist. Lay the foundation then, Sir, of faith truly so called, without which there can be no superstructure; then add to this faith virtue; to virtue then even knowledge itself; after which

good or rather great natural abilities, in which simplicity of thought original hath been preserved. But more of this hereafter.

Some are so full of a gross mixture, are so oppressed with an heap of confused, indeterminate, and indigested ideas, which they know not how to make use of, and which are at perpetual war with each other, that their minds truly resemble the Poets ancient chaos, and are one grand scene of confusion. Hence they write they know not what, and contradict themselves. And yet they are so self sufficient withal, with this heap of trash in them, without any true ground for it, that one should almost imagine, by their vain attempts that they thought that truth had no essential and permanent being, or that they could give that being to it. This is pride and impiety, if I know any thing of it; not the true and deep contemplation of things revealed, for the sake of the understanding, and for the raising and heightening of true devotion in the mind, attended with the deep sense and acknowledgment, that we are indebted for all our knowledge and reason to the universal light of the minds of all men, and true instructor of our souls. See St. John's Gospel Chap. i, ver. 9 and xviii, 37, 38 --- I should not write so sharply upon this subject, had not former attempts been made, and were there not the strictest reason for it, both on account of men's ignorance and unfavourable prepossession of mind, as well as of that tyranny and forwardness of will so observable, and seemingly withal so determined, as not to admit an alteration in sentiments on these matters, even for the better.

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the truly heroic, meek, and heavenly graces and virtues of the Christian mind will follow one another in due course. But for a man to think that he has charity, while he is pretending without knowledge to direct his neighbour into a safe path, and, instead of doing so, shews him into one which leads to a precipice, from whence he may fall into a dreadful abyss of misery eternal, is at least a great weakness, if not more highly criminal and a gross deception of himself.

The point now is whether it is a man's duty to endeavour to undeceive you and others; to use efforts; or whether it is better to sit down tame and contented without them. If not, and the subjects herein discussed cannot properly be treated in a more indifferent and to many perhaps more pleasing manner, with any prospect of success in convincing men of the present days of the horrid nature of blasphemy, and rousing them from that dangerous state and fatal kind of lethargy, with which their understandings are stupified and rendered inactive, and in which their minds are oppressed and sunk, in a kind of inert and dead languor, I hope that due allowance will be made, if what is contained herein is found to be perfectly agreeable to what is in scripture revealed, coinciding with the sentiments of the most sublime geniuses, the most rational and truly philosophic divines, and in union and harmony with the devotion of those  
exalted



exalted minds, of those pure and rare spirits, which, in that ordinary course of things distributed, have heretofore appeared. To answer the end proposed sound and also sublime arguments must be thought of; and that these may be urged with such due efficacy and full effect, strong expressions also must be used. Let this therefore be the fair apology for both to you and all men.\*

I am

\* Moses we know at his request was favoured with even ocular sight of part of God's glory, and three of the apostles without any request at all, with a view of the transcendent glory of Christ, the express image of the Father, even face to face. How comes it then that some Christians declare that to contemplate the Being of Beings, the Eternal Spirit and his attributes, and that ideal wisdom the truth in Christ, begotten by him from all eternity, and resident in his nature, and to believe that a spirit proceeds from the central glory and presence of the Father through infinite space, full of all perfection, whereby the Divine Being is omnipresent, things all fully declared in scripture, is proud and impious? Faith it must be allowed is even the substance or full confidence of things hoped for, the very evidence of things not seen. It is, like historical and other description, a ground for the mind to work on, a kind of ideal sight, whereby the great Raphael even painted the famous picture of the transfiguration. And yet I do not find, even in the Romish church, famous for so many acts of deliberate persecution, that he was on that account ever called proud and impious, but admired by all, and his memory revered ever since, by men of genius and true taste. In fact faith is that glorious grain of mustard seed, in embryo as it were, which, notwithstanding Mr. Locke's notions, whereby he absurdly pretendeth to confine the intellectual powers, and rule the mental faculties of all men, when expanded and full grown, no man can determine the absolute size of. Was the great Rector of Sarum, as good a Christian philosopher, under a common dispensation, as perhaps was ever heard of, in his day, ever persecuted for entertaining such exalted ideas of the Divine Nature, or for his sublime and even fervent devotion arising from them? Are we not commanded to communicate our knowledge if we can, and to resist unbelievers? What were Stillingfleet and Waterland, a prelate and a divine of great and worthy memory, about in their day, were they not engaged in this same business? And is it then unpardonable for any man to know any thing of divinity, except regularly bred divines, or have no-

I am not insensible that meekness and gentleness are necessary and shining qualifications, as well as knowledge and a true zeal. But, as there is great defect in every thing we do, and one

tions different from those which some but not all those truly orthodox have adopted and entertained ?

To contemplate truth the intellectual light of the world is most undoubtedly one of the great privileges of our nature, whereby we are distinguished from the beasts that perish. And our mental faculties can never be so well directed, as in endeavouring to gain a true knowledge of the Divine Nature, as far as we are able. The heavens *declare* the glory of God saith a divine prophet. And again, in the regular and due transition from things material to spiritual, The law of the Lord is perfect converting (or restoring) the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever : the judgments of the Lord are *truth* and righteousness all together. More to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey, and the droppings of honey combs.

When Solomon desired wisdom, was not his request pleasing to the Almighty ? Was he not on that account with many others, favoured with a true knowledge of the Divine Nature, long before the period of the Christian revelation, having described the essential wisdom of God which was with him in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old, in his Proverbs, chap. viii. in his Wisdom, chap. vii. and the same person again, under the title of the Word, in chap. xviii. a passage as truly sublime as any in all antiquity ; and declared that the spirit of the Lord filleth the world, and containeth and hath knowledge of all things in it, in the 1st ?

If then Gentlemen have any thing to alledge against my opinions, I hope for the future they like you will ingenuously publish their sentiments in print, that it may be seen, as Mr. Locke justly said, on which side the weight of evidence lies : this will be open, fair, and generous. You may be assured I will give what arguments you may advance against such of my notions as may be questioned without using blasphemous ones, as candid an examination as they are entitled to, or will admit ; though it be against my nature well to endure people who set themselves up for teachers of others in sublime and essential matters, and for directors of their conduct, without knowledge, by any means, adequate to it.

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man has his gift after this manner and another after that, if the honour of God and the good of men are evidently two grand objects in any thing, we ought to accept it as such, and by no means to cavil unjustly at things and writings in which there is merit, because that in them perfection is not to be found.

Sorry am I for many reasons that I am obliged to write against you, first, because you have much natural ingenuity, which I never could do otherwise than respect : and secondly because you pay a regard to the practise of the moral duties : but there are some opinions which you hold that no man of knowledge can dispense with. I should be ready to do you any good office. But what more friendly and charitable task can I take upon me, than that of endeavouring to shew you, in a clear light, the pernicious nature of such capital errors, and the dire consequences of persisting in them? Every truly ingenuous man when he sees them will acknowledge them. Should he not however he must answer for them, and the ill effects they produce. For whoever rejecteth the word of truth, that word, according to the express declaration of him who cannot lie, will most infallibly judge him in the last day. By reason of your close adherence to such errors in your writings, I am obliged, against my will, to rank you in my mind and thoughts among those who, I think, have done their endeavour, I hope unwittingly,

wittingly, to corrupt that pure religion handed down to us, by the able and excellent men of former times; to consider you at present as one who seem to me, while your mother country is sick of many sore diseases, and labouring and even groaning under many miseries, to have added your part at least, unfortunately, to the weight of her great affliction. A most affecting consideration this to a truly serious, thoughtful, and feeling mind! You and Dr. M---n would probably think yourselves ill used, if ye were denied being men of ability. But what ability can consist with notions inferior to, and much below the common sense of mankind? You most undoubtedly hitherto, for the most part, have pursued a wrong road, in which you cannot possibly attain perfection; nor obtain objects worthy the choice of a soul of a superior cast. Alter then your course, lay aside little and degrading notions, emancipate your mind, and be truly great. May you then, Sir, go on to be approved and respected, and I will be one of the first to admire your abilities, and to revere your virtues. You will then not only meet with approbation, but what is more, deserve it: have not only the esteem and affection of well-meaning and good men, but of those of great knowledge also; to obtain which otherwise, though they may charitably wish you well, is impossible. I am

Your well-wisher

And very humble servant.

